

The West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative



A Shared Partnership

Trafficking and Organized Crime – A Direct Threat to U.S. National Security

West Africa is facing a growing danger from transnational criminal organizations whose activities threaten the collective security and regional stability interests of the United States, our African partners, and the international community. Illicit markets and those who profit from them weaken public institutions, foster corruption, and foment violence. Combating these organizations requires an integrated, whole-of-government approach in close coordination with our African and international partners. To address this threat, U.S. government agencies coordinated to develop the West Africa Cooperative Security Initiative (WACSI). The United States, in consultation with African and international partners, seeks opportunities to complement and enable regional and national initiatives that seek to achieve similar objectives.

WACSI: An Integrated, Collaborative Regional Security and Rule of Law Initiative

Criminal networks are multidisciplinary and transnational, which is why WACSI draws on expertise from across the U.S. government and is built on cooperation with our international partners. The United States is committed to fight transnational organized crime (TOC) around the world – including in West Africa.

The Five Goals of WACSI:

- 1. Build accountable institutions;**
- 2. Establish legal and policy frameworks to counter transnational organized crime;**
- 3. Strengthen security operations;**
- 4. Reinforce justice operations; and**
- 5. Address the socio-economic causes and consequences of transnational organized crime.**

WACSI implements a multi-layered approach that helps West African states strengthen their capacities; invests in future anti-TOC partnerships; and builds on regional and inter-regional networks to support our African partners as they address TOC-related challenges.

U.S. Assistance – Meeting the Threat – Building Capacity

The United States will continue to offer technical assistance to build accountable and effective government institutions and an active civil society, both of which can address TOC and its supporting activities,

including drug trafficking, corruption, and money laundering. Programming under WACSI is aligned with the five goals and includes

1. Technical assistance and capacity-building to help governments and civil society develop the skills to combat impunity;
2. Technical assistance in drafting and enacting anti-TOC laws and policies;
3. Investing in counternarcotics units, operational training and equipment, and technical assistance to build basic law enforcement skills and institutional capacity;
4. Technical assistance to build the capacity of prosecutors and judges to prosecute and adjudicate complex TOC cases; and
5. Drug demand reduction and raising public awareness of TOC and the laws and policies designed to combat it.